

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on May 12, 2004, and the references cited therewith.

No claims are amended, cancelled, or added; as a result, claims 1-58 remain pending in this application.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant submitted an Information Disclosure Statement and a 1449 Form on January 28, 2004. Applicant respectfully requests that initialed copies of the 1449 Form be returned to Applicants' Representatives to indicate that the cited references have been considered by the Examiner.

§103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-58 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ekstedt et al. in view of Tong (U.S. 4,896,269).

Ekstedt describes a control system for automated parametric test equipment, including the ability to define and execute test sequences on such equipment. Ekstedt further teaches, as in the cited Figure 9's element 76, sequential control of both semiconductor test equipment such as a wafer loader, and parametric test equipment such as a prober.

Ekstedt fails, however, to teach concurrent control of operation of both semiconductor test equipment and parametric test equipment. In contrast, the present invention claims a semiconductor parametric test system in which concurrent control of both parametric test equipment and semiconductor test equipment is performed.

The Office Action appears to rely on Tong to show concurrency of the parametric test control and semiconductor test equipment control, but Tong teaches only prioritization of scheduling conflicting jobs, and fails to address concurrent control of anything. Tong's prioritization of conflicting jobs so that they may be serially scheduled in a certain order is contrary to what is taught in the present invention's claims and discussion of concurrent control. Attention is drawn specifically to the prior art example and to page 5 of the specification, which

is drafted to clearly explain how concurrent control applied to certain example embodiment of the present invention differs from prior art such as the serially scheduled systems of Eckstedt or Tong.

Because neither cited reference teaches concurrent control of parametric test instrumentation and semiconductor test equipment as is recited in the pending claims and further defined in the specification of the pending application, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reexamination and allowance of pending claims 1-58 is therefore respectfully requested.

The pending Office Action further takes official notice, or find anticipation where one or more elements are missing in cited references, throughout the document. Applicant requests that should such rejections be maintained, references showing each element of the pending claims and motivation for combination of such references be shown.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (612) 349-9581 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

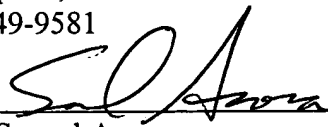
Respectfully submitted,

SERGEY A. VELICHKO ET AL.

By their Representatives,

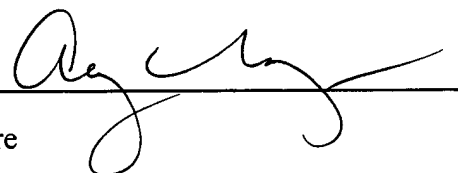
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Date August 12, 2004

By 
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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 12th day of August, 2004.

Amy Moriarty
Name


Signature